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Etheldreda House,
ELY.

ELY URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

To: The Chairman and Members,
Ely Urban District Council.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies & Gentlemen - I have the honour to submit my Annual Report for the year ending 31st December, 1952.

1. STATISTICS: During 1952 the usual statistics have been kept and are available. These are not included in my report.

2. a. Ambulances: Two Ambulances are stationed at Ely both being operated by the Isle of Ely County Council. One is for Infectious Diseases and the other for non-infectious diseases.

The St. John Ambulance at Littleport has been also available throughout the year. This Ambulance works under an agency agreement with the County Council. Members of the Littleport Ambulance and Nursing Divisions man and drive this vehicle. Their efforts are very much appreciated in the District, and their record is an excellent one.

b. Nursing and Clinic Arrangements: These are the same as for previous years. The District Nurses continue to maintain their fine record of service.

c. Hospitals:
(i) Tower House Hospital for Chronic Sick.
(ii) The Isolation Hospital.
(iii) The Grange Maternity Home.
These Hospitals are under the control of the Regional Hospital Board.

3. WATER:

a. The supply for Ely, including Stuntney, Adelaide, Prickwillow and Chettisham is obtained from two wells and one borehole at the Council's Waterworks at Isleham. The condition of the plant including the pumping and chloramine equipment proved to be satisfactory throughout the year.

The quantity and the quality of the water has also proved satisfactory.

There have been no major breakdowns during the twelve months.

Referring to the Schemes for increased water storage, new 12" mains and the possibility of increased output from Isleham, which were noted in my Report for 1951, the report from the Consulting Engineers has been received and will shortly be submitted to the Ministry of Health.

I have again to refer to the condition of the existing 12" pumping main, which, although very shaky, has not yet given way. No one can be certain when a major breakdown will take place, and it can only be hoped that nothing serious will occur in the near future.

WATER (Contd).

b. i. Two routine chemical and five bacteriological examinations were made during the year, and all proved satisfactory. These samples are dealt with by the Public Health Laboratory Service in Cambridge now, instead of employing a private firm.

ii. The water has no plumbo-solvent action.

iii. No contamination was discovered during the year and, therefore, no action in respect of this has been necessary.

iv. 96% of the dwelling houses in the area are supplied with water direct from public water mains.
4% of the dwelling houses in the area are supplied by stand-pipe.
It is estimated that the percentage of the population supplied approximates to the figures given above for houses.
There are possibly some 30 outlying properties, which are at present not on the mains.

4. SEWAGE:

i. Extensions: a. During the year there have been the necessary extensions put in for the Council Houses under construction.
b. The Downham Road Sewer has been started, and is now nearly complete. This should be of material benefit to this area.
c. The complete Schemes for the Sewage Disposal Works and the provision of relief and new main sewers will be discussed with the Ministry of Health early in the New Year, in the hope of obtaining a grant under the Rural Sewage and Water Supply Act. These works are in my opinion now very much overdue.
d. The present Sewage Disposal Works are far from complete and are not adequate for the needs of the City; but it must be remembered that these were started during the recent War in an effort to cope with the greatly increased needs resulting from War conditions.
e. There are still some few lengths of open Water-course, acting as public sewers. The difficulties and delays in abating these, seem to be inevitable, unless help from the Ministry can be obtained.

5. HOUSING:

a. During the year, the following work has been done:-
87 Nuisances abated by owners after informal action, co-operation with owners maintained during the year.

b. 2 Demolition orders were made during the year.
2 Houses were made fit for human habitation after formal procedure under the Housing Act 1936.

5. HOUSING (Contd).

c. 7 Houses were made fit for human habitation after informal action.

d. One undertaking to demolish when empty was accepted.

e. 2 Houses were demolished where demolition orders were operative.

The Sanitary Inspector has put in some excellent work inspecting houses under the Public Health Act 1936 & Housing Act 1936.

In a few cases, owners have raised objections to Demolition Orders after they have been made. The Council is, I know, always careful to follow exactly the legal procedure as laid down: and in every case "Notice of Time and Place" has been formally served. It must be obvious, therefore, that such owners to which reference has just been made, have only themselves to blame.

There are still numerous properties which cannot be classed as satisfactory. Some of these, I feel, may arise from difficulties due to the Rent Restriction Acts. Concessions here would, I hope, result in improvements being carried out by Landlords.

Every effort is made by the Sanitary Inspector and myself to track down and deal with genuine cases of over-crowding: but this type of work can only be dealt with slowly.

6. SCHOOLS:

I welcome the commencement of the building of the New Infants School in Downham Road - work which was very long overdue.

So far as the other Schools in Ely are concerned, these are unchanged - and, therefore, so are my comments contained in previous Annual Reports. To summarise the position in these words: "Far from satisfactory".

7. MILK:

My comments for 1951 apply equally for this year, as the Council has little control over milk supplies.

There are, however, two practices which I deeply deplore, viz:-

i. The custom of leaving full milk bottles in the sun, and in positions where they are accessible to the attention of passing cats and dogs.

ii. The uses to which empty milk bottles are put by a few thoughtless persons, such as the temporary storage of liquids other than milk. This is grossly unfair to the retailers of milk. It is difficult to know how to prevent this abuse, other than by appealing to the common sense and decency of users.

8. INFECTIOUS DISEASE:

a. 28 notifications of infectious diseases were received. The total is made up as follows:-

Whooping Cough	4
Scarlet Fever	1
Pneumonia	10
Erysipelas	2
Anterior Poliomyletis	8
Salmonella Infection	2
Infective Hepatitis	1
Total	28

8. INFECTIOUS DISEASES (Contd).

b. Disinfection of premises etc., is regularly carried out in cases of notifiable disease; also when infection is reported, or requests are received for any special reasons. Clothing and bedding are disinfected at the Isolation Hospital, by arrangement with the East Anglian Hospital Board.

c. No case of diphtheria was notified in Ely during this year. I cannot stress too strongly the importance and value of the immunisation of children against this disease. Immunisation can always be carried out, free of charge, by the family medical practitioner, or at the County Council Clinics.

d. During the year, I was shocked to discover that, following an outbreak of Salmonella Typhi-murium infection at a general Hospital outside the area, carriers and patients were coming into this area without any notification to me. Following very strong representations by me to the Hospital concerned, I was glad to be assured that adequate steps were taken at once by the Hospital authorities, with the result that no spread of the infection occurred in the district.

e. Tuberculosis: 8 New cases were notified during the year. After making necessary adjustments, there are now the following numbers on the Register:-

	Respiratory:	Non-Respiratory:
Male	23	5
Female	11	8

Compared with 1951, the figures show an increase of 6 Cases, made up as follows:-

	Respiratory:	Non-Respiratory:
Male	2	0
Female	4	0

9. FOOD:

i. 12 Premises are registered for the preparation of Sausages and Preserved Food.

ii. 25 Premises are registered for the Storage and Sale of Ice Cream.

iii. Improvements carried out by structural works to the Slaughter House to prevent meat being blown by flies. Ministry of Food co-operated here.

a. The inspection of Food premises has continued. Progress has been made, but has been much slower than I could have wished. This may arise more from misapprehension rather than wilful obstruction. There is no doubt that some local shops are far from satisfactory, particularly where flies and (in a few cases) vermin are concerned. I wish shopkeepers and the public would realise how deadly the scourge of flies can be, particularly where children are concerned.

9. FOOD: (Contd).

b. I am glad to report that practically every shop continues to exhibit the notices requesting the public not to bring dogs into food premises - and I am most grateful for this co-operation on the part of the City's Food Traders. The same embargo should, in my opinion, also apply to cats.

c. I would, once again, re-iterate that I consider success can only be achieved in this by strict attention to personal hygiene on the part of all concerned. - "Success can only be obtained by the carefulness, enthusiasm and sense of responsibility amongst those who actually handle food and food stuffs". (See Annual Reports 1950 and 1951).

Some food traders do go to a great deal of personal trouble to keep themselves up-to-date in modern methods of hygienic food handling. I wish this could be said of every such trader in the City.

I may say that co-operation by rate-payers will always be welcomed by my Staff and myself.

d. Every opportunity is taken of watching conditions under which Ice-Cream is sold. I am aware of the care which is taken by the big Manufacturers: but such care is considerably lessened, if dirty utensils and containers are used after delivery to retailers.

10. MISCELLANEOUS:

i. Insect Pest Control:

Disinfestation carried out where necessary; treatments have been carried out for bugs, fleas, beetles, cockroaches, ants, woodworm and wasps.

ii. Shops:

Periodical inspections have been carried out under the Shops Act 1950. It must be pointed out, however, that the Local Authorities responsibilities are restricted to sanitary accommodation, temperature and ventilation.

Some of my remarks under paragraph 9 "Food" apply here, as well, of course.

Shopkeepers are at last beginning to realise that employees require congenial surroundings and amenities when at work. Every shopkeeper should ensure that sanitary accommodation is readily available for all employees; that the temperature is comfortable in winter and summer and that adequate ventilation is ensured even in the smallest shop.

iii. Rodent Control:

Much good work has been carried out by the Rat Catcher. 276 Treatments have been carried out. More could be done, if householders and tradespeople were less hesitant to invoke the Council's assistance. The reporting of infestation is a legal obligation on those concerned, but I doubt if this is at present fully appreciated.

iv. Smoke Nuisances:

The year under review has, I am glad to say, been less unsatisfactory - a result, I am sure, due to the vigorous activities of the Staff.

10. MISCELLANEOUS: (Contd).

v. Moveable Dwellings:

This problem, arising chiefly from the activities of temporary agricultural workers, gypsies etc., still causes me much anxiety. The legal remedies under the Public Health Act 1936 are very difficult to apply effectively. Farmers generally, I feel, could help to abate this nuisance by seeking the advice and co-operation of the Public Health Department: and without increasing the difficulties of their own aspects of this problem. For example - on one site, with co-operation from a local farmer a small colony of caravan dwellers completely changed their dirty habits and became clean, useful citizens.

During the year, the County Council, as planning authority, circulated for comment, a draft statement of policy with regard to Caravan Sites in the County. The District Council noted with pleasure that this statement contained what it considered were adequate measures in the matter of sanitation, refuse disposal, water etc.

vi. Factories:

Such Factories as are in the District are inspected periodically and action taken as indicated.

vii. Swimming Pool:

During the season five bacteriological and two chemical samples of swimming pool water were taken.

Towards the end of July, a routine sample of water from the Pool was found to be unsatisfactory. I closed the Pool forthwith on the 26th July, and following the continuation of chlorination during the succeeding days, and the receipt of satisfactory bacteriological results from further samples, the Pool was re-opened on 2nd August.

11. PERSONAL:

Whilst placing on record my great regret at losing the co-operation and assistance of my colleague for many years - Mr. A. E. King, the Surveyor, Sanitary Inspector & Water Engineer: I wish to take this opportunity of welcoming Mr. King's successor - Mr. J. V. G. Shilston, A.M.I.C.E., M.I.Mun.E., etc., to whom I now express my thanks for his help and forbearance, since his appointment in August.

The Sanitary Inspector Mr. H. Smith, has been a tower of strength to me - and to him I wish specially to express my very grateful thanks.

I have the honour to be,
Ladies & gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

(Sgd.) K. S. MAURICE SMITH,

Medical Officer of Health,
Ely Urban District Council.

24.8.53.